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The Islamic Practice of Consummating a New Marriage (Nikah)

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful!

I. Consummating the marriage as husband and wife

After the terms of the marriage contract has been fulfilled, the specifics of the dowry agreed upon, and the actual nikah ceremony has been performed, the bride and broom at this point are now lawfully regarded as husband and wife in Islam. The couple is now permitted to expose their awrah to one another, inherit as a lawful heir according to the guidelines established by Allah, and enter the home together in order to consummate their marriage. However, before entering the home the couple should say "Bismillah." This fact is evident from the

hadith of Imam Muslim wherein Jabir (RA) reportedly said: "**I heard the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) saying, 'If a person mentions the Name of Allah upon entering his house or eating, Satan says, addressing his followers: 'You will find nowhere to spend the night and no dinner.' But if he enters without mentioning the Name of Allah, Satan says [To his followers]; 'You have found [A place] to spend the night in;' and if he does not mention the Name of Allah at the time of eating, Satan says, 'You have found [A place] to spend the night in as well as food.'**"

Engaging in sexual relations with one's spouse is an important aspect of a marriage which Islam has explained in great detail in order for the Muslim ummah to have the ideal model for proper conduct which will elevate the act from the level of mere bestial pleasure and physical desire to an act of worship which will provide a couple with both physical and spiritual reward. The evidence supporting the fact that Allah has prescribed marriage as the only lawful means of procreation is Surah Al-Rum (30:21) of the Quran which reads: "**And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): Verily in that are Signs for those who reflect.**" Furthermore, a hadith in the collection of Ahmad (RA) reports: "**(A Muslim) would have intercourse with his spouse and would be rewarded for it. The**

Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) asked: 'Oh Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.)! A person would be rewarded while satisfying his sexual need?' Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H.) replied: 'Yes. Is not it a fact that he would be punished had he practiced sex illegally? The same applies if a Muslim practiced lawful intercourse with his spouse. As such, he would be rewarded.'"

With this being said, it is important to reiterate the fact that a female can be married prior to puberty in Islam; however, in order to lawfully consummate the marriage and/or accompany her husband to his home, the young wife in question must receive her menses or one of the other signs of puberty; i.e., when she becomes a women both religiously (according to God's law) and biologically.

Preparing one's body prior to consummating the marriage:

As a general practice, a Muslim should always be neat and have good personal hygiene. However, special care should be taken to ensure that one is as pleasing to their new spouse as possible. Therefore, it is advisable that each spouse should perform the following:

Brush their teeth - in order to remove any debris and freshen one's breath. This fact is evident from the hadith of Imam Muslim wherein Ayesha was asked what the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) did when he first came home? She was reported to have

said, **"When he (P.B.U.H.) entered his house, the first thing he would do was use the siwaak (twig used to brush/clean the teeth)."**

Ensure that one's body smells pleasant; because, the freshest one's body smells is after a shower or a quick wash, and the worst it smells is after it is saturated with sweat and has not been cleaned for an extended period of time! Therefore a complete ghusl or at least wudu, accompanied by washing the private parts is strongly encouraged. This fact is evident from Surah Al-Baqarah (2:222) of the Quran which reads: **".... For Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean."**

Apply perfumes, oils and the like to add a pleasant aroma to the body. It is also important to note that it is better to use natural substances that have been recommended in Islam as they lack chemical ingredients which may cause damage to the body. This fact is evident from the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Imran ibn Husayn narrated: **"The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: 'I do not ride on purple, or wear a garment dyed with saffron, or wear a shirt hemmed with silk.' Pointing to the collar of his shirt al-Hasan (al-Basri) said: 'The perfume used by men should have an odor but no color, and the perfume used by women should have a color but no odor.' Sa'id said: 'I think he said: They**

interpreted his tradition about perfume used by women as applying to when she comes out. But when she is with her husband in the home, she may use any perfume she wishes."

Lawfully groom one's body by removing what has been detailed in the Prophet's (P.B.U.H.) sunnah. This fact is evident from the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Abu Hurayrah narrated: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: He who has hair should honor it**." Additional evidence is found in the hadith of Bukhari wherein Jabir bin Abdullah narrated: "**..... I replied, I am newly married.' He (P.B.U.H.) said, 'Did you marry a virgin or a matron?' I replied, 'A matron.' ... When we were about to enter (Medina), the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said, 'Wait so that you may enter (Medina) at night so that the lady of unkempt hair may comb her hair and the one whose husband has been absent may shave her pubic region**.'" Furthermore, another hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Abu Harairah reports: "**The Prophet (PBUH) recommended five things for the Muslim as commendable acts: circumcision (for males), removal of pubic hair, removing arm pit hair, trimming the moustache (for males), and clipping the nails**." Moreover, a hadith in the collection of Imam Muslim that was narrated by Anas (RA) maintains that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) set a time limit with regard to some of these sunnahs, stating that they should not be left for more than

forty days. The hadith in question reads as follows: Anas (RA) reportedly said: **"A time limit was set for us with regard to cutting the moustache, clipping the nails, plucking the armpit hairs and shaving the pubes – we were not to leave these for more than forty days**." Lastly, the nails of the female can be beautified by adding henna. This fact is evident from the hadith of abu Dawud wherein Aisha, Ummul Mu'minin (RA) narrated: **"A woman made a sign from behind a curtain to indicate that she had a letter for the Apostle of Allah (P.B.U.H.). The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) closed his hand, saying: 'I do not know if this is a man's or a woman's hand.' She said: 'No, a woman.' He said: 'If you were a woman, you would make a difference to your nails, meaning with henna (henna stains the nails like nail polish; however, unlike nail polish, it does not prevent water from penetrating the nails during wudu or ghusl)**.'"

Approach one's wife prior to intercourse in a manner that is characteristic of a God-fearing person; thus, invoking Allah's blessing upon the union and exhaust every effort to ease her tension and make her as comfortable as possible. This is the sunnah; because, the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) instructed the groom to be kind to his bride, and to comfort her while invoking Allah's blessing. The evidence for this advice is found in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:223) of the Quran which reads: **"Your**

wives are as a tilth unto you; so approach your tilth when or how ye will; but do some good act for your souls beforehand; and fear Allah. And know that ye are to meet Him (in the Hereafter) and give (these) good tidings to those who believe."

As soon as the husband and wife are together in their home for the first time, he should audibly thank Allah for rewarding him with such a woman as his wife. By doing so audibly in her presence, this will not only be reassuring to the new wife's self-esteem; i.e., erasing any doubt that her new husband will not pleased with her looks, but will also motivate her to work hard at keeping him satisfied with her personality and character. Likewise, the wife should say similar to the husband; such as pointing out the kindness she sees in him. The reason being, even if the new wife is not a virgin, there is still likely to be some feelings of apprehension about what will happen on the wedding night when the marriage is consummated; thus, by stressing the fact that she is attracted to the kindness in his disposition, the new husband will be inclined to reflect upon this attribute during their first sexual encounter and at later instances of conflict throughout the marriage; i.e., focus on being gentle and considerate with the wife's virginity and if he were to become angry with her at any point in the future, he would reflect upon her statement regarding the

kindness she sees in him and will likely refrain from verbally and physically abusing her. The evidence for these and similar directives is found in the hadith collected by Abu Dawud wherein Ibn Masud, Abu Dhar, and other companions (RA) reportedly said to Abu Sa'id (a freed man of Abu Usayd) when marying: **"When you enter upon your wife (for the first time), you have first to perform two rak'ats and then hold your wife's head and say, 'O Allah! Bless my wife for me, bless me for my wife, give her bounty out of me, and give me bounty out of her!' Then you can do what you want.'"**

Next, after a husband places his hand on his wife's forehead and prays two rakahs, the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) recommended that the couple should start every act of intercourse by saying: "In the name of Allah, O Allah, protect us from Shaytan and protect whatever You give to us from Shaytan." The evidence for this directive is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Ibn Abbas reportedly said: "The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said, **"If anyone of you, when having sexual intercourse with his wife, says: Bismillah, Allahumma jannibni-Sh-Shaitan wa jannib-ish-Shaitan ma razaqtana, and if it is destined that they should have a child, then Satan will never be able to harm him."** Thus, in addition to satisfying one's sexual desires, intercourse is also the method which Allah instituted

for mankind as a means of procreation. This fact is evident from another hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein Jabir bin Abdullah narrated: **"The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said, '..... (O Jabir!) Seek to have offspring, seek to have offspring**!'" It is also important to note that although it is practical to have sexual intercourse on the very first night of marriage after the wedding ceremony, the act of sexual intercourse may be delayed, and even methods of birth control can be employed if there are mitigating circumstances justifying said practices. The evidence for this ruling is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Jabir narrated: **"In the lifetime of Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H.) when the Quran was coming down, we used to withdraw the penis, so if it had been something to be forbidden, the Quran would have forbade us from doing it**." However, it is worth mentioning that the act of birth control in Islam is strongly discouraged and ineffective against preventing one's wife from getting pregnant if Allah has decreed it. This fact is evident from the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri narrated: "A man said, **'O Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H.), I have a slave-girl and I withdraw the penis while having intercourse with her and do not want her to conceive, but I want (from her) what men want from women; and the Jews used to say, 'Withdrawing the penis to avoid conception is the minor burying alive.' He (P.B.U.H.) replied, "The Jews**

told a lie, for if Allah wishes to create it you would not be able to turn it away."

Say bismillah before removing one's clothes. The evidence for this directive is the hadith of Tirmidhi wherein Anas narrated that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) reportedly said, "**When a person undresses for the purpose of either relieving himself or bathing or having relations with his spouse then the shaytan interferes and plays with his or her private parts. But if he or she says Bismillah before taking off the clothes, then this serves as a barrier and safety against the shaytan and jinn**." Furthermore, a husband and wife should take into account the distress that could ensue from stripping completely naked in the bedroom for the first time. Therefore, the couple should close the door to the room and remove their clothes in a manner that diminishes their feeling of shyness. Thus, the lights in the bedroom should be turned off or at least dimmed if the room will become too dark to safely maneuver about. The evidence for this ruling is a hadith collected by Bukhari wherein Jabir bin Abdullah narrated: "**Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) said, '(At bedtime) cover the utensils, close the doors, and put out the lights, ...**'" Moreover, the proof that the innate feeling of shyness (haya) that one experiences when removing their clothing in the presence of their new spouse is actually virtuous character

trait is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Abdullah ibn Umar reportedly said: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) passed by a man who was admonishing his brother regarding Haya and was saying, 'You are very shy, and I am afraid that might harm you.' On that, Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) said, 'Leave him, for Haya is (a part) of Faith**.'"

It is also important to note that a husband and wife are not required to completely strip while standing; rather, they can accommodate their shyness by simply removing their clothing while sitting; i.e., just as the shoes are to be put on and removed while in a seated position. The evidence for this ruling is the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Jabir reported: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) forbade a man to do up his sandals while standing up**." Likewise, the sunnah method of removing one's clothing is detailed in the following hadith of Bukhari, under the chapter on clothing, which reads as follows: "**When wearing one's trousers, first put on the right leg, then the left one. When putting on a kurta or shirt, first put on the right sleeve and then the left one. The same procedure should be followed when wearing a vest. When wearing a shoe, first put on the right shoe. When removing any garment or shoe, first remove the left, then the right. This is the sunnah method when removing any garment from the body**."

Lastly, since the couple is likely to be quite shy in front of each other, it is advisable that the husband and wife should remove their underwear while lying underneath the covers, after the bed has been wiped clean and purified by invoking Allah's name. This course of action is extremely advantageous; because, if the husband is well endowed, seeing the size of his private part may add further stress to the new wife who is likely to be a virgin. Thus, by removing his underwear under the covers, the husband will spare his new bride from experiencing any unnecessary stress surrounding the matter of consummating the marriage. Furthermore, the evidence for the practice of wiping the bed with a garment before lying on it is found in a hadith collected by Bukhari wherein Abu Huraira reported: **"The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said, 'When anyone of you goes to bed, he should dust it off thrice with the edge of his garment, and say: Bismika Rabbi wada'tu janbi, wa bika arfa'hu. In amsakta nafsi faghfir laha, wa in arsaltaha fahfazha bima tahfaz bihi 'ibadaka-s-salihin.'"** Furthermore, another narration from Abu Huraira in the collection of Imam Muslim reports: **"Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H.) reportedly said: 'When any one of you goes to bed, he should take hold of the hem of his lower garment and then should clean (his bed) with it and should then recite the name of Allah for he himself; because, he does not know what harmful thing was left behind for him on his bed; and when he intends to lie on**

the bed, he should lie on his right side and utter these words: 'Hallowed be Allah, my Lord. It is with Your (grace) that I place my side (upon this bed) and it is because of You that I take it up (after sleeping). And in case You withhold my being (if You cause me to die), then grant pardon to my being, and if You maintain (my life), then protect it with that with which You protected Your pious servants.'" Lastly, it is a smart decision to place a towel on the bottom bed sheet as a safety precaution against any possible bleeding which may occur.

The act of sexual intercourse should always be preceded by foreplay; because, it is a well known fact that even while fasting the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) would show affection to his wives by passionately kissing them in the mouth. This fact is evident from the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Aisha (RA) reportedly said: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) would kiss her whilst he was fasting and he would suck her tongue**." Thus, in light of this evidence, it is safe to say that since the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) went as far as to show his wife affection by passionately kissing her while fasting, there is no excuse for any husband not to kiss his wife and engage in other acts of foreplay prior to having sexual intercourse with her. However, it is important to point out the fact that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) was not like other men with regard to self-control. This fact is

evident from the hadith of Imam Muslim wherein Ayesha (RA) narrated: "**Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H.) used to kiss (his wives) while fasting and embraced (them) while fasting; but he had the greatest mastery over his desire among you**."

With this being said, even though foreplay is encouraged prior to engaging in sexual intercourse, it is not recommended that a man with heightened sexual desire should kiss his wife while fasting if he does not have sufficient self-control. Furthermore, it is even prohibited in Islam for a young man to kiss his wife while he is fasting due to the likelihood that he will not be able to adequately keep his desires in check. This fact is evident from a hadith in Malik's Muwatta wherein he reportedly said: "**Yahya related to me from Malik from Zayd ibn Aslam from Ata ibn Yasar that Abdullah ibn Abbas was asked about people kissing while fasting and he said that he (P.B.U.H.) allowed it for old men but disapproved of it for young men**." Nevertheless, outside of fasting, it is important to reiterate that a husband should exhaust ever effort during foreplay to administer kisses, kind words, caressing, and the like to ensure that his wife is fully aroused in order to make the act of sex as enjoyable as possible for her. This point is further addressed in Turning Sex into Sadaqa, an excerpt taken from a publication by Ruqaiyyah Waris Maqsood titled, *The Muslim*

Marriage Guide; wherein she states, "kisses and words' do not just include foreplay once intimacy has commenced. To set the right mood, little signals should begin well in advance, so that the wife has a clue as to what is coming, and is pleasantly expectant, and also has adequate time to make herself clean, attractive and ready. As regards intimacy itself, all men know that they cannot achieve sexual fulfillment if they are not aroused. They should also realize that it is actually harmful and painful for the female organs to be used for sex without proper preparation. In simple biological terms, the woman's private parts need a kind of natural lubrication before the sexual act takes place. For this, Allah has created special glands, known to modern doctors as the Bartholin glands, which provide the necessary 'oils.'"

It is also worth mentioning that throughout a couple's married life, a husband should keep in mind the fact that his wife is a more emotional creation than he, and as such, he should keep their love-life healthy by frequently performing acts which will let his wife know that she is still desirable to him. It is also important to note that telling one's wife that you love her is all fine and good, but steps should be taken to let her that that you find her sexy and that she is able to satisfy you sexually. The reason being, men enjoy being pleased

sexually; however, women on the other hand, too also enjoy being pleased sexually but seem to find more comfort in the fact that they are able to give pleasure to their husbands. This is why the average husband will rollover and go to sleep without having any desire to cuddle with his wife after climaxing during intercourse; However, a wife on the other hand will engage in certain acts which do not necessarily interest her at all, solely because she is aware of the fact that her mate finds them pleasurable. What is more, a wife will even persist with performing said acts until her husband is completely satisfied; and only then will she cease. So, in a wife's defense, she may be more selfish when it comes to receiving attention throughout the day; however, it is the husband who will generally assume the selfish role at night, particularly when the couple engages in sexual intercourse.

Women love being desired and appreciated! With this being said, while engaging in foreplay leading up to actual intercourse, a husband should behave very sincerely, politely and tenderly toward his wife, constantly remembering to shower her with love and compassion. This will prepare his spouse both physically and psychologically. He should also make her feel so comfortable that she will speak freely to him when feeling discomfort. A God-fearing husband should also remember that he

can obtain blessings from Allah for performing the act of sex in a manner that will not make his wife fear and despise having sexual intercourse. As such, he should not be hasty and rude; forcing her into uncomfortable positions. Both parties should actively take part in the act; thus, a wife should be permitted to experience sexual satisfaction by being complemented, caressed, and permitted to receive pleasure in any position and manner she finds enjoyable. It is therefore important to reiterate that a couple can satisfy themselves in any manner they prefer, even if it goes against the cultural norms of the older generations; except those acts which Allah has explicitly forbidden, such as anal sex and while menstruating. This fact is evident from Surah Al-Baqarah (2:223) of the Quran which reads: **"Your wives are as a tilth unto you; so approach your tilth when or how ye will....."** However, it is important to note in instances where a husband has more than one wife, even though Allah permits him the right to have more than one wife, he is not permitted to engage in sexual intercourse simultaneously with them. This fact is evident from the hadith of Imam Muslim wherein Abd al-Rahman, the son of Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, reported from his father: **"The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said: 'A man should not see the private parts of another man, and a woman should not see the private parts of another woman, and a man should not lie with another man under one covering, and a woman**

should not lie with another woman under one covering.

Furthermore, a similar hadith in the collection of Abu Dawud that was narrated by Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reports: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: 'A man should not look at the private parts of another man, and a woman should not look at the private parts of another woman. A man should not lie with another man without wearing lower garment under one cover; and a woman should not lie with another woman without wearing a lower garment under one cover**.'"

While on the subject of looking at the private parts, even though the above mentioned ahadith explicitly prohibit two wives from simultaneously being under the same covering or exposing their private parts to the other, a husband however, is permitted to either have intercourse with his wife under a covering or with her body exposed. This fact is evident from the above mentioned verse from Surah Al-Baqarah (2:223) of the Quran which reads: "**Your wives are as a tilth unto you; so approach your tilth when or how ye will....;**" and from a hadith in the collection of Abu Dawud wherein Mu'awiyah ibn Haydah reportedly said: "**I asked the Prophet (P.B.U.H.), which of our privacy can we show? The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said, 'Keep your privacy hidden except before your wife and what your right hand possesses**.'" Nevertheless, a hadith in the collection of Tirmidhi that was

narrated by Ya'la ibn Umayya reports: **"The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said: 'Verily Allah is modest and discreet and He likes modesty and discretion....'"** Therefore, since a new husband and wife are expected to be shy in front of each other, the nervousness and fear of having one's nakedness exposed can be appeased by simply performing the sex act under the covers. Also, while under the covers, the couple should talk for some time with the husband telling the wife how beautiful she is while slowly caressing her body. The husband can also ease the tension in the room without ruining the mood with excessive conversation by pointing out to his wife during the conversation what he actually finds most desirable about her. This will in the same instance allow the wife to loosen up to her husband's advances and gain confidence in her body and ability to please her husband. Even if the new wife feels shy to speak or to confide in her new spouse, the husband should continue with sincere conversation and intimacy in order to enter her heart gradually; because, the time the he spends getting her aroused is an investment. If he invests his time wisely and establishes a good rapport of intimacy with his wife, it will pay off to the point that his wife will learn to be lustful towards him; with sex being viewed as a highpoint of their relationship versus a burdensome task. However, if a new wife is not able to overcome her shyness and anxiety, the husband should be mindful that the

first night is not an unchangeable measure; and if unsuccessful, it should be accepted as a normal occurrence. Moreover, by being patient and understanding, the husband will gain the respect and trust of his new wife. He should then hold her in his arms and spend the night cuddled up with her; because, he can always pick up where he left off at a few hours later.

The breaking of one's virginity generally should not pose any major complications for a new wife or husband under normal circumstances. Therefore, to ensure that the wife is adequately aroused and lubricated, the husband should "gently" caress the opening of her vagina with his fingers. He should also attempt to slowly loosen the opening by gradually inserting the tip of one finger into it. This course of action should be accompanied by kissing and constantly asking her if he is being too rough or moving too fast. Moreover, to be considerate towards his wife, a husband should loosen her vagina to the point that he is able to fully insert his finger, before mounting her for penetration. In essence, the husband should insert his finger with the objective of moving it in a manner that will not only loosen the pathway but will simultaneously stimulate her to the point that she will begin caressing his finger with the walls of her vagina. Similarly, he should take special care not to be forceful in any manner. Therefore, he should listen carefully to hear if she is

either moaning from pleasure or groaning from pain. Also, halal lubricants can also be used if necessary when the actual penis is being inserted. With this being said, if blood is detected at any point during or after the husband actually penetrates his wife's vagina, it should be viewed as a natural byproduct of virginal intercourse. Likewise, light spotting of blood may also occur at other times during intercourse, and should only be considered problematic if it presents itself in a heavy flow or if it is accompanied by uncharacteristic and painful symptoms. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the absence of blood during the act of consummating the marriage for the first time does not mean that a wife is not a true virgin. Furthermore, there are a number of ways in which the hymen can rupture naturally; especially among women in Western societies who have the tendency to participate in activities which are generally shunned by women in traditional Islamic societies. Lastly, even the use of tampons can actually rupture the hymen of a virgin. So, a husband should not dishonor his new wife by implying that she is not chaste if no blood is detected; because, if he cannot provide four witnesses to confirm his accusation, he will receive a punishment of eighty lashes. This fact is evident from Surah Al-Nur (24:4) of the Quran which reads: **"And those who launch a charge against chaste women, and produce not four witnesses (to support their allegations),- flog them with eighty**

stripes; and reject their evidence ever after: for such men are wicked transgressors." Allah knows whether she is truthful or not; as such, Allah will deal with her on the Day of Judgment if she is in fact guilty of lewdness.

Lastly, even though the husband is permitted to have intercourse with his new wife while she is lying on her back, down on her knees, etc., he should be patient with her and gradually proceed with more advanced positions only after she begins to show signs that she is able to handle it; such as by not blocking or bracing/tensing up, which basically happens when she realizes that he will proceed gently with her. The evidence that the husband can have intercourse with his wife in various positions is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Jabir (RA) reportedly said: "**The Jews claimed that whenever one approaches his wife from her back, the child will be born cross-eyed. Therefore Allah revealed, 'Your wives are as a tilth unto you so approach your tilth when or how you will.' The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said when explaining that verse to us: "(It is permissible for one) to approach his wife's vagina from rear or front position**.'"

If by chance that one or both of the newlyweds are disabled, they should also take things slowly and constantly check to see if their spouse is having a good time. If by chance either spouse experiences a great deal of discomfort or feels as

though there is too much pressure on their body, the couple should accommodate the situation and switch to an alternate position. Sexual positioning devises such as the thigh sling are quite useful in this situation. It is also important to note that penetration is not always necessary for sexual intercourse to be enjoyable. In many instances, having a disability actually makes penetration difficult or just plain hard work. Therefore, if this is the case, it may be advantageous to simply use sex devices to assist in pleasuring the other spouse; because, many individuals with disabilities find it easier to achieve sexual fulfillment in this manner than through the traditional penetrative sex methods. Lastly, a husband or wife should avoid thinking too much about whether or not they will achieve an orgasm. They should rather concentrate on the pleasurable feelings that they and their spouse are experiencing.

If a husband and wife are able to successfully consummate their marriage but the act does not live up to the couple's expectations; such as the husband climaxing too soon or even before actual penetration has occurred, the husband should continue to satisfy his wife through other means until he is revitalized and able to reengage her in the sex act. This fact is evident from the commentary of Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi, former President of the Islamic Society of North America,

regardinng Surah Al-Baqarah (2:187) of the quran. Dr. Siddiqi reports as follows: "It is also emphasized in Islam that a husband should not deny his wife's physical needs. Both of them are related to each other, as Allah says in the Quran, 'They are a garment for you and you are a garment for them ...'" Dr. Siddiqi further stated, "A husband who without any genuine reason neglects his wife's needs is as sinful as a wife who neglects her husband's needs without any excuse..." Likewise, a statement of Imam Ahmad that was narrated by Ibn qudamah reports: "**Imam Ahmad was once asked whether the man was rewarded for having sex with his wife while he did not have any desire for sex. Ahmad replied affirmatively**." Therefore, once revitalized, the husband in question should now be able to perform with more vigor; because, the initial excitement is now over and ejaculation in this second instance generally does not occur as quickly. Nevertheless, although, the new husband might be slightly embarrassed by what he considers to be a subpar performance due to is overzealousness, just like the new wife who is unable to perform the sex act on the very first attempt, this incident (climaxing before actual penetration or immediately thereafter) should be viewed as totally normal for him as well.

It is also important to note that in certain instances, some men are even plagued with temporary sexual impotence due to the excessive excitement or anxiety surrounding the event which is expected to take place on the wedding night. Therefore, if the new husband does in fact find himself in this particular situation, it would be practical to delay the act of sexual intercourse for a couple of hours or until he notices himself becoming erect. The act can even be delayed a few days if necessary. However, if unable to achieve an erection after a week, the husband in question should seek medical assistance. Furthermore, while addressing the issue of delaying consummating the marriage, it is imperative that a husband who is enlisted in the military be aware of the fact that he must not go to war until his marriage is officially consummated. This fact is evident from the hadith of Bukhari wherein Abu Huraira narrated: **"The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said, 'A prophet among the prophets went for a military expedition and said to his people: 'A man who has married a lady and wants to consummate his marriage with her and he has not done so yet, should not accompany me.'"**

As for the matter of delaying consummating the marriage in instances where a new husband is plagued with temporary sexual impotence, according to a fatwa issued by Shaykh Bin Baz on June 26, 1998 in Riyadh (Okaz newspaper), when questioned as to

whether the drug Viagra which is currently being used for the treatment of erectile dysfunction was permissible for use, he allegedly said, "Using this drug that helps sexual intercourse is permissible and there is no legal Islamic prohibition against it provided that it does not contain ingredients which may be deemed harmful to one's health or any intoxicating materials." With this being said, the husband and wife who know what to expect with regard to this and similar situations will be mentally prepared on their wedding night. Thus, the couple will not be plagued by feelings of despair regarding their performance. The wife should also accept and tolerate the situation if her new husband does not perform as expected. She should find subtle ways of reassuring him that she is not disappointed, such as kissing on him and caressing his body in a manner which will communicate to him that she is aroused and has the desires to satisfy him further. This will also be a good time for the new wife to gain more confidence in their sexual relationship. While initiating her brand of foreplay, she should subtly touch her husband in places that will make him aroused. This fact is evident from the hadith of Bukhari wherein Jabir Ibn 'Abdullah narrated: "**..... He (P.B.U.H.) said, 'Why have you not married a virgin to fondle with each other**?"

The reasoning behind advancing subtly is due to the fact that men generally have shallow egos which are bruised quite easily. Therefore, being too aggressive could intimidate him and actually diminish his sex drive. With this being said, the new wife should therefore coax his ego by telling him what she enjoyed most and what she desires for him to do next to pleasure her. This type of communication is very advantageous; because, a successful sex-life in a marriage is based on a husband and wife's ability to honestly express themselves to their spouse.

If a husband and wife can establish a level of communication and rapport in their marriage to the point where they can divulge any fantasy or thought which might enter their mind, their relationship will not be plagued by feelings of boredom, insecurity, and an overall lack of sexual fulfillment. Sadly, it is unlikely that most couples will ever receive open and upfront information such as this. As a result, many Muslims will spend their lives in lifeless marriages.

Even if a husband and wife are fortunate enough to receive open and upfront advice as to how to have a healthy sex-life, neither of them is permitted to discuss the intimate details of their marriage in an explicit manner. This fact is evident from the hadith of Imam Muslim wherein the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) reportedly said "**The most evil of the people to Allah on the Day**

of Resurrection will be the man who consorts with his wife and then publicizes her secret. Furthermore, a husband or wife should not even describe the physical appearance of another person to the point that the other spouse or a third party can formulate a mental image of the individual being described. This fact is evident from the hadith of Bukhari wherein Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud reportedly said: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said, 'a woman should not look at or touch another woman to describe her to her husband in such a way as if he was actually looking at her**.'" Lastly, according to a hadith collected by Ahmad, Asma bint Yazid reportedly said: "**I was once in the presence of the Prophet and there were both men and women sitting. The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) then said: 'Perhaps a man might discuss what he does with his wife, or perhaps a woman might inform someone what she did with her husband?' The people were silent. Then I said: 'O, Yes! O Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) verily both the women and men do that.' Then the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: 'Do not do that. It is like a male Satan who meets a female Satan along the way, and has sex with her while the people look on**!'"

After completing the initial sex act for a substantial period of time for which the couple does not regard as mere resting until revitalized, a complete ghusl or at least wudu should be performed by the husband and wife. Tayammum may also be

performed if the couple does not possess adequate water. The evidence for this ruling is the hadith of Imam Muslim wherein it is stated: "**The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) reportedly said: 'If one of you had intercourse with his wife and then wants to come to her again, it is better for him to perform ablution, for it gives him vigor to come again**." However, if a husband has intercourse with his wife and wants to come back to her a second time, and is able to perform a complete ghusl between the two actions; this is more beneficial. The evidence for this position is the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Abu Raafi' narrated: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) went around his wives one day and did ghusl in this one's house and in this one's house. He (Abu Raafi') said: 'I said to him, O Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.), why do you not do one ghusl?' He said, 'This is cleaner and better and purer**.'" What is more, according to a hadith collected by Imam Muslim, Ayesha (RA) is reported to have said: "**When the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) did ghusl after having intercourse, he would start by washing his hands, then he would pour water with his right hand onto his left hand and wash his private parts, then he would do wudu as for prayer; then he would take the water and put his fingers in his hair till he reached the roots, and when he saw that the water had reached the roots, he would pour water over his head three times. Then he poured water over the rest of his body; then he washed his**

feet." Likewise, another hadith in the collection of Imam Muslim further reports that Umm Salamah (RA) reportedly said: "**I said, O Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.), I am a woman who braids her hair, should I undo it to perform ghusl after having intercourse?' (According to another report, she said: 'And after my period?') He said, 'No. It is enough for you to pour water on your head three times**.'"

Lastly and most importantly, the permissibility to perform tayammum is found in Surah Al Ma'idah (5:6) of the Quran which reads: "**..... But if ye are ill, or on a journey, or one of you cometh from offices of nature, or ye have been in contact with women, and ye find no water, then take for yourselves clean sand or earth, and rub therewith your faces and hands (tayammum), Allah doth not wish to place you in a difficulty, but to make you clean, and to complete his favor to you, that ye may be grateful**."

After ghusl or some other form of purification has been made, and the husband and wife plan retire to bed for sleep, the couple should ensure that all utensils have been put away, that all food dishes are covered, that all doors have been closed, and that all lights are turned off (Specifically lights from a real fire source). The evidence for this ruling is a hadith collected by Bukhari wherein Jabir bin Abdullah narrated:

"Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) said, '(At bedtime) cover the utensils, close the doors, and put out the lights, lest the evil creature (the rat) should pull away the wick and thus burn the people of the house.'" Furthermore, another hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Jabir bin Abdullah reports: "Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) said, **"When night falls (or when it is evening), stop your children from going out, for the devils spread out at that time. But when an hour of the night has passed, release them and close the doors and mention Allah's Name, for Satan does not open a closed door. Tie the mouth of your water-skin and mention Allah's Name; cover your containers and utensils and mention Allah's Name. Cover them even by placing something across it, and extinguish your lamps."**

Once inside the bed, the couple may either lie-down cuddled together or separated, as long as they are lying down on their right side with their hands under their cheek, or in a position other than on their stomach. This fact is evident from the hadith of Bukhari wherein Ibn Abu Mulaika reportedly said: **"Aisha said, 'The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) died in my house on the day of my turn while he was leaning on my chest closer to my neck...'"** Furthermore, another hadith collected by Bukhari reports: **"Aisha said, The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) and I used to wash from the same container when we were both in janaba. While I was**

menstruating, he told me to wrap my waist-wrapper around myself and then he cuddled me..." Likewise, the evidence for sleeping without being cuddled id a hadith of Bukhari wherein Al-Bara' ibn 'Azib said, "**When the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) used to retire to his bed, he would lie on his right side and then say, 'O Allah, I surrender my soul to You and I turn my face to You and I entrust my affair to You and I seek Your support with hope and fear of You. There is no refuge from You but to You. I have believed in Your Book which You sent down and Your Prophet whom You sent**.'" Moreover, according to another hadith in the collection of Bukhari, Hudhaifa allegedly said: "**When the Prophet (saws) retired to bed at night, he (saws) would put his hand under his (right) cheek and then say, "Allahumma bismika amutu wa ahya (O Allah, by Your Name I die and I live)" and when he (saws) got up (from sleep), he (saws) would say, "Al-Hamdu lil-lahi al-ladhi ahyana ba'da ma amatana, wa ilaihi an-nushur (Praise be to Allah Who gave us life after death, and to Him is the return.**" Similarly, additional evidence for the Prophet's (P.B.U.H.) positions of sleeping is detailed in another hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Abdullah ibn Zayd who reported: "**I saw the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) lying on his back in the mosque with one foot on top of the other.**" Lastly, Ya'ish ibn Tikhfa al-Ghifari is reported to have said, "**My father reported: "Once while I was lying on my stomach in**

the mosque, a man moved me with his foot and said, 'This is a position which Allah hates (sleeping on the stomach).' He said, 'I looked up and it was the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.).'"

If the wife is experiencing her menses (hayd) on the day of the nikah (wedding), she and her new husband will not be able to consummate their marriage until after her menses has passed and she has purified herself; because, Islam has strictly prohibited one from engaging in sexual intercourse during menstruation. This fact is evident from Surah Al-Baqarah (2:222) of the Quran which reads: **"They ask thee concerning women's courses. Say: They are a hurt and a pollution; So keep away from women in their courses and do not approach them until they are clean. But when they have purified themselves, ye may approach them in any manner, time, or place ordained for you by Allah. For Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean."** Likewise, Abu Hurayrah reported in a hadith collected by Abu Dawud that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) allegedly said: **"If anyone resorts to a diviner and believes in what he says, or has intercourse with his wife when she is menstruating, or has intercourse with his wife through her anus: he has nothing to do with what has been sent down to Muhammad (P.B.U.H.)!"** What is more, Ibn Abbas (RA) was even of the opinion that one guilty of having sexual intercourse with his

wife while she is menstruating should be required to give half a Dinar as expiation. The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Abu Dawud which declares: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) reportedly said: 'Whoever has sex with his wife during her menses (*hayd*) should pay half a Dinar**.'"

With this being said, the one guilty of having sexual intercourse during their menstrual cycle should purify themselves physically by performing a complete ghusl and spiritually by making a sincere repentance to Allah. This fact is evident from the hadith of Bukhari wherein Abu Huraira reportedly said: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said, 'When a man sits in between the four parts of a woman (two arm and two legs) and has sexual intercourse with her, a bath becomes compulsory**." Furthermore, the evidence for making a sincere repentance to Allah is a hadith collected by Tirmidhi wherein Anas (RA) reportedly said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) say, Allah stated: '**O son of Adam! I will forgive your sins no matter how many you have committed irrespective of their greatness as long as you pray to me and you expect forgiveness from me. O son of Adam! I will forgive you even if your sins are so many as to fill the skies if you ask forgiveness from me. O son of Adam! If you come to me with so many sins as to fill the earth, I will welcome you with so much mercy as to fill the earth if you have**

not associated partners with me.'" Lastly, even though having sexual intercourse during the time of menses (hayd) is a detestable act, a husband is still permitted to embrace his wife, provided that her vaginal area is adequately covered. This fact is evident from a hadith in the collection of Bukhari wherein it is related from Zaynab bint Abi Salama: "**Umm Salama said, 'Once while I was with the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) under a black woolen cover I started my menstrual period and I slipped away and came out of it and got my menstruation clothes. The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said to me, 'Have you started menstruating?' I said. 'Yes.' He called to me and I lay down again with him under the cover**.'" Likewise, a hadith collected by Imam Muslim that was narrated by Ayesha (RA) reports: "**When anyone amongst us (amongst the wives of the Prophet) menstruated, the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) would ask her to tie a waist-wrapper over her (body) and then he would embrace her**." However, as a precaution, it is better for the couple if the husband does not play with his wife's body between the navel and the knees to avoid coming into contact with her menstrual blood. Lastly, if at any time during sexual intercourse the wife discovers that her period has begun, the husband should immediately cease the sex act and purify himself. In this instance he will not be considered sinful in the eyes of Allah

provided that he stops immediately after discovering the presence of his wife's menstrual blood.

In instances wherein a wife is experiencing vaginal bleeding that is not related to menstruation (hayd), her husband in this instance, is permitted to have sexual intercourse with her provided that she purifies her body before commencing the sex act. The evidence for this ruling is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Ayesha (RA) reportedly said: "**Fatimah bint Abi Hubaysh came to the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) and said: 'O Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.), I am a woman who experiences Istihadah (non-menstrual vaginal bleeding) and I do not become clean from bleeding. Should I forget about Salah?' He said: 'No, that is from a vein; it is not menses. When your period starts, then stop praying, and when it ends, wash the blood from your body and pray again.'**" What is more, another version of this hadith that was narrated by Abu Mu'awiyah reported that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) further said: "**Make Wudu for each prayer, until the time for the next prayer comes...'**" Thus, in view of the above mentioned ahadith, since the female's body is considered purified to the point that she is permitted to make her daily required fard prayers, her body is therefore considered purified to the extent that she can lawfully engage in sexual intercourse with her husband. Likewise, another hadith in the collection of

Bukhari that was narrated by Umm Salamah (RA) provides the method for which a wife should use to distinguish her non-menstrual vaginal bleeding (istihadah) from her menses (hayd). The hadith in question reads as follows: "**I asked the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) about this condition. He (P.B.U.H.) said, 'She should wait for the days and nights of her normal period and figure them out of the month, and she should leave the prayer during those days. (Afterwards) she should perform ghusl, tighten something around her vagina and then pray.**'" Therefore, once a wife is able to distinguish her non-menstrual vaginal bleeding (istihadah) from her menses (hayd), based on her body's normal cycle, she should then purify herself with a complete ghusl, and thereafter, she will lawfully be permitted to have sexual intercourse with her husband.

With this being said, it is important to note that hayd is the natural flow of blood from the womb which occurs approximately monthly in a woman after her body starts to have a monthly period. If the bleeding exceeds the longest duration of hayd, it is merely classified as irregular vaginal bleeding which is referred to as istihadah. Unlike menses, which has a blood source that stems from the uterus after puberty and contains unfertilized ova, the non-menstrual vaginal bleeding of istihadah is generally caused by the al-adhil vein or some other

reason; i.e., it is purely blood. However, due to the dilemma of determining the longest duration of a female's actual hayd, the issues pertaining to menstruation can be quite controversial. This fact is evident from the statements of Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (RA) in Majmoo' Al-Fataawaa, 19/237 wherein he reportedly said: "Allah has attached numerous rulings to menses in the Quran and Sunnah; however, He did not state the minimum or maximum length of a female's menstrual cycle; nor the length of the period of purity between two separate menstrual cycles." He further said: "Some of the scholars defined a maximum and minimum, but they differed concerning that, and some even stated a maximum length without defining a minimum. Nevertheless, the third view is most correct, which states that there is no minimum or maximum length for a female's menstrual cycle." Therefore, if a wife experiences regular monthly periods, and then becomes irregular and exceeds the longest duration of her hayd, or if she was never regular and now her periods are longer than the longest hayd duration of any previous menstrual cycle, she will be regarded as a mustahadah.

According to Shaykh Bin Baz, "A Mustahadah is a woman who suffers from abnormal vaginal bleeding outside the menstrual or post-partum periods. As such, the same ruling will apply to her as any other non-menstruating women. Accordingly, she is allowed

to observe Sawm (Fast), offer Salah (Prayer), and have sexual intercourse with her husband. However, she must perform wudu (ablution) before each Salah, as in the case of one who should perform wudu due to passing urine or wind. She also has to clean away the discharged blood with a piece of cotton or something similar to keep her body and clothes clean." With this being said, the wife who is regarded as Mustahadah will belong to one of the following three categories:

1. The wife is able to differentiate between the menstrual (hayd) which is dark in color, thick and heavy in consistency, with a distinct smell, and does not clot; from her non-menstrual blood (istihadah) which is lighter and thinner. Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (RA) in Majmoo' Al-Fataawaa, 19/237, confirms the above mentioned distinctions between menses and istihadah to be as follows: "Color (menstrual blood is black [dark red] while the blood of istihadah is red); consistency (menstrual blood is thick and heavy, while the blood of istihadah is thin); smell (menstrual blood has an offensive odor while the blood of istihadah does not; because, it comes from an ordinary vein); and clotting (menstrual blood does not clot when it comes out of the body while the blood of istihadah does clot because it comes from a vein)." Thus, whenever vaginal

bleeding is detected by the wife, whether it is a little or a lot, it will be classified as either her menses or istihadah based on the above mentioned characteristics. The evident for the above mentioned description of menstrual blood is the hadith of Abu Dawud which reads: "**Once, when Fatimah bint Abu Habash had a prolonged flow of blood, the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) told her, 'If it is the blood of menstruation, it will be dark and recognizable. If it is that, then leave the prayer. If it is other than that, then make ablution and pray, for it is only due to a vein.'**" Another version of this hadith narrated by Fatimah daughter of Abu Hubaysh reports: "**Urwah ibn az-Zubayr reported from Fatimah daughter of Abu Hubaysh that her blood kept flowing, so the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said to her: When the blood of the menses comes, it is black blood which can be recognized; so when that comes, refrain from prayer; but when a different type of blood comes, perform ablution and pray, for it is (due only to) a vein.**"

Lastly, a woman can be certain that her period has ended by two distinct signs; namely, by the presence of a white discharge which comes from the womb to show that the period is over, and by the complete absence of menstrual blood in its various shades; whenever the white discharge

is not detected. The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Bukhari in mu'allaq form wherein Ayesha (RA) reportedly said: "**Women would send (me) Ayesha small boxes with yellow-stained cotton, and I would tell them, 'Do not be in haste until you see the pure white discharge on the cotton.' If the discharge is yellow or muddy during the days of menstruation, it is to be considered as part of the menses. During other days, it is not regarded as such. Umm Atiyyah said, '(After we were pure), we did not consider the yellow or muddy discharge to be anything.'**" It is also worth mentioning that a wife's judgment should not be overshadowed regarding the establishment and ending of her menses; because, in a hadith collected by Bukhari, Ali and Shurayh are reported to have said: "**If a woman brings testimony from members of her close family, who are known to be good Muslims, that she menstruates three times a month, she should be believed (that the blood is not istihadah).**"

2. The wife is neither able to differentiate between the menstrual (hayd) and non-menstrual bloods (istihadah), nor can an expert assist her in telling the difference between the two; however, she is able to remember the routine of her monthly period based on the manner in which it occurred

in previous months. With this being said, the evidence for the method that a female should use to differentiate between the menstrual (hayd) and non-menstrual bloods (istihadah) is the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Aisha (RA) reportedly said: "**Bahiyyah said: 'I heard a woman asking Aisha about the woman whose menses became abnormal and she had an issue of blood. The Apostle of Allah (P.B.U.H.) asked me to advise her that she should consider the period during which she used to menstruate every month, when her menstruation was normal. Then she should count the days equal to the length of time (of her normal menses); then she should abandon prayer during those days or equal to that period. She should then take a bath, tie a cloth on her private parts a pray.**'" Therefore, if a wife can neither distinguish between the two types of bleeding, nor can an expert, then she should govern herself according to the habit of her previous menstrual cycles, and avoid praying, fasting, and having sexual intercourse with her husband during those days of the month in which she would generally be experiencing her menses. Anytime of the month thereafter, it is permissible for her to resume her acts of worship to Allah and have sexual intercourse with her husband.

3. A wife cannot differentiate between her menstrual (hayd) and non-menstrual bloods (istihadah), her bleeding happens to be of only one type, she cannot remember the routine of her monthly period based on the manner in which it occurred in her previous monthly cycles, or she simply has never had a monthly period prior to the occurrence of the bleeding; in this instance, the wife in question should consider her bleeding to be that of hayd for six to seven days, and then she should resume having sexual intercourse with her husband; in addition to performing her other acts of worship to Allah. The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Abu Dawud wherein the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) reportedly said to Hamnah bint Jahsh: "**Observe your menses for six or seven days, Allah alone knows which it should be; then wash. And when you see that you are purified and quite clean, pray for twenty three or twenty four days and nights, and fast, for that will be enough for you. Furthermore, do so every month; just like the women whom menstruate and are purified at the time of their menstruation and their purification.**"

A final and important note regarding the issue of menses involves the manner in which a wife should purify her body and keep it smelling pleasant. The evidence for the sunnah method of

purification is the hadith collected by Imam Muslim, wherein Ayesha (RA) reportedly said: "**Asma inquired the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) about the bath for purity from Menses. He stated: 'First put some berry leaves (antiseptic soap, scented oil etc.) in the water. Then put the water on the head and rub the hair well so that the water reaches the roots of the hair. Then pour water on the entire body. Then take some cotton wool scented with musk and purify yourself (to remove bad smell).' Asma (RA) endured: 'How to purify by cotton wool?' The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) stated: 'Pure is Allah! Purify yourself.' Ayesha (RA) whispered: 'Place it at the place of menses...'**" Furthermore, a hadith in the collection of Imam Muslim that was narrated by Ayesha (RA) also reports: "**Asma (RA) asked the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) about ghusl following menses. He said: 'Let one of you take her water and lotus leaves and clean herself well, then let her pour water over her head and rub it vigorously so that it will reach the roots of her hair. Then let her pour the water over herself, then take a piece of cloth scented with musk and purify herself.' Asma then said: 'How should she purify herself?' He (P.B.U.H.) said: 'Subhaan-Allaah! Purify yourself with it.' Ayesha said, as if she whispered it to her, 'Follow the traces of blood.' And she asked him about ghusl in the case of janaabah. He said: 'Let her take water and clean herself well or clean herself thoroughly, then let her pour**

water over her head and rub it so that it reaches the roots of the hair, then let her pour water over herself.' Ayesha said: 'How good the women of the Ansaar were! They did not let shyness prevent them from understanding their religion properly.'" Likewise, a hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Aisha (RA) further reports: **"A woman of the Ansar said to the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) 'How should I perform ghusl after menstruation?' He said, (after making ghusl) 'Take a piece of perfumed cloth and clean yourself three times.' Then the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) became embarrassed and turned his face away. I took her and pulled her to one side and explained to her what the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) meant.'"** Moreover, in light of this evidence it is therefore important to note that when performing ghusl, a woman does not have to actually undo the braids in her hair, unless they are tied so tightly that she fears that the water will not reach the roots/scalp; because, in the hadith of Imam Muslim, Umm Salamah (RA) narrated that she said to the Prophet (P.B.U.H.): **"I am a woman with braided hair; should I undo it when doing ghusl following menses or for janaabah? He said: 'No, rather it will be sufficient for you to pour three handfuls of water on your head, then pour water over yourself and you will be purified.'"** However, there are some narrations which maintain that the braided hair of a woman at the completion of her menses must be unbraided; such as the narration from Umm Salamah in a

hadith collected by Imam Muslim which states that she asked the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) about a woman's bath (ghusl), and he reportedly said: "**If a woman is performing ghusl after having sexual intercourse, then there is no need for her to unbraid her hair. It is sufficient that she pours water over her head three times. But, when she is performing ghusl after completing her menstrual period, then she has to unbraid her hair**." Nevertheless, regardless of which method a wife uses to purify herself after the completion of her menses, it is imperative that she totally avoids exposing herself to any person other than her husband; as in the case of a woman who exposes herself to others in a public bath. The evidence for this ruling is a hadith collected by Tirmidhi wherein Jabir (RA) reportedly said: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: 'Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him not allow his wife to go to the Public baths. Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him not go to the baths except with a waist-cloth. And whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day let him never sit at a table at which intoxicants are being circulated**.'" Likewise, the evidence for the permissibility of a wife to expose herself in front of her husband is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Hisham bin Urwa (on the authority of his father) narrated that Aisha said: "**I and Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H.) used to take a bath from a single water container, from which we took water simultaneously**."

In addition to during the times of her menses, a wife is also not permitted to have sexual intercourse with her husband while she is experiencing post-natal bleeding (nifas); which is the term that applies to the blood which flows from the uterus after childbirth; regardless of whether the baby is born alive or stillborn. However, in rare instances wherein a wife gives birth to a baby without any bleeding, the general ruling pertaining to nifas will not apply to her. Therefore, in instances wherein a wife experiences difficulties during childbirth and ultimately delivers her baby by means of a Caesarian section, in which case the baby exits her body from a method other than by traveling through her vagina, she will not be classified as experiencing nifas as long her vagina does not leak any blood from the labor. Also, if a wife has a miscarriage and human features, such as the head, limbs, or even the outlines thereof have not yet appeared on the fetus, the bleeding which occurs in this instance will be classified as istihadah; because, the pregnancy has yet to produce an actual fetus. This fact is evident from Surah Al-Hajj (22:5) of the Quran which reads: **"O mankind! If you are in doubt about the Resurrection, then verily! We have created you (i.e. Adam) from dust, then from a Nutfah (mixed drops of male and female sexual discharge i.e. offspring of Adam), then from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood with no circulation) then from a little lump of flesh (mudghah),**

partly formed and partly unformed, that We may make (it) clear to you (i.e. to show you Our Power and Ability to do what We will). And We cause whom We will to remain in the wombs for an appointed term, then We bring you out as infants, then (give you growth) that you may reach your age of full strength. And among you there is he who dies (young), and among you there is he who is brought back to the miserable old age, so that he knows nothing after having known...." Likewise, a hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Hudhayfa (RA) maintains that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) reportedly said that it is not until after forty-five days after conception; nearly nine weeks, that the pregnancy produces an actual fetus. The hadith in question reads as follows: "**The angel is sent to the sperm-and-ovum drop (nutfah) after it has settled in the uterus for FORTY OR FORTY-FIVE NIGHTS (nearly 9 weeks after conception) and says, 'Lord! Is it to be wretched or happy?' Then this is inscribed. Then he says, 'Lord! Is it to be male or female?' Then this is inscribed, together with its deeds, its progeny, its term of life, and its sustenance. Then the records are folded up and nothing more is added or subtracted.**'" What is more, the fact that the hadith mentions that it is not until after this forty-five day period (9 weeks after conception) that the angel asks Allah: **'Lord! Is it to be male or female?'** proves that the Prophet's (P.B.U.H.) statements are in accordance with

modern embryology; i.e., it is not until after the forty-five day period (9 weeks after conception) that an actual fetus is formed with its visible sex organ. This fact is evident from a December 4th, 2012 article titled, "Pregnancy week by week" from the Mayo Clinic's website (www.mayoclinic.com), which reports as follows: "At the beginning of the 11th week of pregnancy, or the ninth week after conception, your baby's head still makes up about half of its length. However, your baby's body is about to catch up, growing rapidly in the coming weeks. Your baby is now officially described as a fetus. This week your baby's eyes are widely separated, the eyelids fused and the ears low set. Red blood cells are beginning to form in your baby's liver. **By the end of this week, your baby's external genitalia will start developing into a penis or clitoris and labia majora**."

It is also worth mentioning that additional evidence proving that a pregnancy does not produce a living human until after the forty-five day period (9 weeks after conception) is the hadith of Bukhari that was narrated by Anas (RA) who reportedly said: **"Allah Most High has appointed an angel over the uterus who says, 'Lord! It is now a sperm-and-ovum drop (nutfa). Lord! It is now a thing that clings (alaqa). Lord! It is now a thing like chewed flesh (mudghah); i.e., partly formed partly unformed (showing that all of these early stages take**

place around the first forty-five days of development).' Then, when he wants to complete its fashioning (showing that at this stage (mudghah) the fetus is partly formed and partly unformed with no visible sex organ), he (the angel) asks, 'Male or female; happy or wretched? What is his share of sustenance? What is his term of life?' All this is inscribed [as it is] in his mother's belly.'" Lastly, a hadith collected by Imam Muslim that was narrated from Hudhayfa ibn Asad reports: **"The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: 'After the sperm-and-ovum drop (nutfa) has been [in the uterus] forty-two days, Allah sends it an angel that gives it form and fashions its hearing, sight, skin, flesh, and skeleton.'"** Thus, it is not until the mudghah stage of development that a miscarried fetus is developed to the point that it can scantily be distinguished from menses. Consequently, if human features have already appeared on the fetus, then the bleeding is classified as nifas.

In view of the above mentioned information, it is also important to note that many authorities deduce that the soul enters the fetus after four months (120 days) of pregnancy due to the wording of the transliteration for hadith No: 4 in An-Nawawi's 40 Hadith. The hadith in question that was narrated by Abdullah bin Masud reads as follows: **"The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) the most truthful, the most trusted, told us: 'Verily**

the creation of any one of you takes place when he is assembled in his mother's womb; for forty days he is as a drop of fluid, then it becomes a clot for a similar period. Thereafter, it is a lump looking like it has been chewed for a similar period. Then an angel is sent to him, who breathes the ruh (spirit) into him. This Angel is commanded to write four decrees: that he writes down his provision (rizq), his life span, his deeds, and whether he will be among the wretched or the blessed...'" The transliteration of this hadith clearly says that the fetus goes through three stages of forty days each (nutfah for 40 days, alaqah for 40 days, and mudgah for 40 days). Then, after the third stage i.e., 120 days, the soul is breathed into the human body. Therefore, the problem arises from the issue of whether the three stages in question actually occur collectively in approximately forty days or a period of forty days each.

Interestingly enough, this narration by Abdullah bin Masud was recorded with different versions wherein some words/terms conflicted with each other, resulting in different versions of the hadith having different meanings regarding a baby's Creation. One such problem stems from the addition of the word "nutfah" (the drop of a fluid). The word "nutfah" is neither found in the narrations collected by Bukhari nor those of Imam Muslim. However, it was added to other narrations including the

one chosen by An-Nawawi to provide a better interpretation of the stages of fetal development. Unfortunately, it generated two conflicting views of the creation of mankind in terms of fetal development. In light of this dilemma, the Scientific Research Committee of IslamToday.net provides the following findings of Jamaal al-Din Zarabozo's commentary from al-Nawawi's 40 Hadith, which reads as follows: "In this case, the oversight may substantially change the meaning of the hadith. With this word (nutfah) missing, the hadith can be understood in the following manner: '**Surely, each of you is brought together in his mother's abdomen for forty days. It is then a clinging object during that same period. Then it is a lump looking like it has been chewed during the same period**.' Hence, all of these stages take place in the first forty days. This way of understanding the hadith is not only consistent with what is considered today as a 'scientific fact,' it is also consistent with the other narrations related to this topic; such as the following three Sahih ahadith from the collection of Imam Muslim, from the section of Kitab al-Qadar, which reads as follows: "**Hudhayfah bin Usayd (RA) narrated: 'After the drop (nutfah) is in the womb for forty or forty-five nights, the angel comes to it and says: 'O Lord, will it be fortunate or unfortunate?' And these matters shall be written. Then he says: 'O Lord, will it be male or female**?'" Likewise, a second hadith reads: "**When the drop**

(nutfah) passes forty-two nights in the womb, God sends to it an angel who shapes it and creates its hearing, seeing, skin, flesh, and bones. Then he says: 'O Lord, is it a male or a female?' Then your Lord decrees whatever He wills...'" Lastly, **"The drop (nutfah) remains in the womb for (about) forty nights. Then the angel appears to it..."** As a final point, it is worth mentioning that neither the Quran nor any ahadith on this subject gives a time frame of 120 days.

It is also important to note that after the stage of pregnancy wherein a fetus has fully developed hearing, sight, and feelings, it is automatically classified as a human being. This fact is evident from Surah Al-Sajdah (32:9) of the Quran which reads: **"But He fashioned him in due proportion, and breathed into him something of His spirit. And He gave you (the faculties of) hearing and sight and feeling (and understanding): little thanks do ye give!"** Also, Surah Al-Mu'minun (23:12-13) of the Quran reads: **"Man We did create from a quintessence (of clay); Then We placed him As (a drop of) sperm in a place of rest, firmly fixed; then We made the sperm into a clot of congealed blood; then of that clot We made A (mudghah) lump; then We made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh (in rapid succession); then We developed out of it another**

creature (the human being). So blessed be Allah; the best to create!"

Once it has been determined that the bleeding of a wife is not her menses, and is in fact blood related to childbirth (the features of the fetus are recognizable), as soon as the bleeding stops, the wife in question should purify her body. However, the scholars differed as to whether ghusl is obligatory in this instance; because, post-natal bleeding (nifas) has no minimum duration; i.e., bleeding does not have to last for forty days. In fact, postnatal bleeding could actually stop right after the delivery of the baby, or there may not even be a single drop of blood visible from the delivery. Thus, in the absence of postnatal bleeding the wife's restrictions would end and she would be obliged to fast, pray, have intercourse once healed, and so on. Nevertheless, it is important to note that there is however a maximum duration of forty days for nifas, which is based on the hadith of Abu Dawud wherein Umm Salamah, Ummul Mu'minin (RA) reportedly said: "**The woman having bleeding after delivery (postpartum bleeding) would refrain (from prayer) for forty days or forty nights; and we would anoint our faces with an aromatic herb called wars to remove dark spots**." Moreover, another hadith of Abu Dawud that was narrated by Umm Salamah (RA) reports: "**During the lifetime of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.),**

the post-childbirth woman would be deemed in restriction for (a maximum of) forty days." Lastly, in the event that a wife becomes a widow due to the death of her husband, even if she is still suffering from postpartum bleeding and four months and ten days of iddah have not elapsed, she is still permitted to remarry; because Surah Al-Talaq (65:4) clearly says: "... **And as for pregnant women, their term shall end with delivery (of the baby)**." However, her nifas (post-partum bleeding) must cease before she can consummate the marriage with her new husband. The evidence for this ruling is a hadith in the collection of Abu Dawud wherein Ubaidullah bin Abdullah bin Utba (bin Mas'ud) reported that his father wrote to Umar bin Abdullah bin al Arqam al-Zuhri that he would go to Subai'ah bint al-Hirith al-Aslamiyya (RA) and ask her about a verdict from him which Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H.) gave her when she had asked that from him (in regard to the termination of 'Idda at the birth of a child). 'Umar bin Abdullah wrote to 'Abdullah bin 'Utba informing him: "**Subai'ah had told him that she had been married to Sa'd bin Khaula and he belonged to the tribe of Amir bin Lu'ayy, and was one of those who participated in the Battle of Badr, and he died in the Farewell Pilgrimage and she had been in the family way at that time. And much time had not elapsed that she gave birth to a child after his death and when she was free from the effects of childbirth she embellished herself for those**

who had to give proposals of marriage. Abd al-Sunabil bin Ba'kak (from Banu 'Abd al-Dar) came to her and said: 'What is this that I see you embellished; perhaps you are inclined to marry, By Allah, you cannot marry unless four months and ten days (of 'Iddah are passed).' When he said that, I dressed myself, and as it was evening I came to Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H.) and asked him about it, and he gave me a religious verdict that I was allowed to marry when I had given birth to a child and asked me to marry if I so liked. Ibn Shihab said: 'I do not find any harm for her in marrying when she has given birth to a child even when she is bleeding (after the birth of the child) except that her husband should not go near her (sexually) until she is purified.'"

With this being said, if the bleeding of a wife either starts or resumes within the forty day period, it will be classified as nifas; and whatever goes beyond the established timeframe of forty days will be considered istihadah (non-menstrual vaginal bleeding), which does not prevent her from praying, fasting, having intercourse with her husband, etc. It is also important to note that the blood and amniotic fluid which accompanies the labor of childbirth is also not regarded as nifas, but rather istihadah. This issue was addressed by Shaykh Ibn Uthaymeen in Fatawa Noor 'ala al-Darb when he

reportedly said: "Nifas is blood and not water. Moreover, if it was nifas, it would be accompanied by labor pains two or three days before giving birth. But if this occurs a long time before giving birth, then it is not nifas; because, nifas is the blood that comes out either at the time of birth or two or three days before it; and it is also accompanied by labor pains. As for water (amniotic fluid), it is not nifas." The evidence proving that any vaginal bleeding of a wife prior to childbirth or outside of her normal menstrual cycle is actually istihadah is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Ayesha (RA) reportedly said: "**Umm Habiba (RA) got bleeding in between the periods for seven years. She asked Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) about it. He ordered her to take a bath (after the termination of actual periods) and added that it was (from) a blood vessel. So she used to take a bath for every prayer**." Furthermore, in Fataawa Islamiyyah, 1/243, Shaykh Bin Baz reportedly said: "If a woman miscarries something in which human features such as a head, arm or leg etc. can be distinguished, then the rulings of nifas apply and she should not pray or fast; neither is it permissible for her husband to have intercourse with her until she becomes pure or until forty days have passed. However, if she becomes pure before forty days have passed, she has to perform ghusl and is then permitted to pray, fast in Ramadan, and have intercourse with her husband. But if no human features can be distinguished in what is passed

by the woman, and it looks like flesh with no distinguishable features, or it is blood, then she comes under the ruling of one who is suffering from istihadah (non-menstrual vaginal bleeding)..." Shaykh Bin Baz is also quoted as saying, "If a woman's nifas stops before the forty days (after the birth) have elapsed, she has to do ghusl and pray and fast Ramadan, and it is permissible for her husband to have intercourse with her. If however the bleeding resumes within the forty days (after the birth), then she has to stop praying and fasting, and it is forbidden for her husband to have intercourse with her, according to the more correct of the two scholarly views. She comes under the rulings on women in nifas until either the nifas stops or the forty days are over. If her nifas stops before or on the fortieth day (after the birth), then she should do ghusl and start praying and fasting; and it is permissible for her husband to have intercourse with her. If the bleeding continues after the fortieth day (after the birth), then this is irregular bleeding (istihadah) and she should not stop praying and fasting because of it; rather, she should pray and fast during Ramadan, and it is permissible for her husband to have intercourse with her – as is the case with a woman with istihadah (irregular, non-menstrual bleeding)."

Lastly, it is important to note that even when a wife is experiencing her monthly menses or has postpartum bleeding, it is absolutely lawful in Islam for her to enjoy all sorts of relations with her husband, except the actual act of sexual intercourse. This fact is evident from the hadith of Bukhari wherein Masruq ibn al-Ajda asked Ayesha (RA), the wife of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.): "**What is off limits to me sexually during my wife's menstruation?' She said, 'Nothing, except her private parts**.'" Similarly, a hadith in the collection of Bukhari that was narrated by Maimuna (RA) reports: "**Whenever Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) wanted to fondle any of his wives during their periods (menses), he used to ask her to wear an Izar (waist wrapper)**." Furthermore, according to Sheikh Muhammed Salih Al-Munajjid: "Allah has permitted intercourse between a husband and wife at all times and in all places, with the following exceptions: 'While the sun is present in the sky during the Islamic month of Ramadan, while the wife is on her menses, while they are inside the masjid, and while either of them is in a state of Ihram while performing the Hajj pilgrimage to Makkah or Umrah. However, at all other times, a husband and wife are permitted to engage in sexual intercourse.'" The evidence for this ruling of Sheikh Muhammed Salih Al-Munajjid regarding the prohibited times of sexual intercourse between a husband and wife are found in surah Al-Baqarah (2:187) of the Quran which

reads: **"Permitted to you, on the night (not during the daylight hours) of the fasts (Ramadan) is the approach to your wives. They are your garments and ye are their garments. Allah knows what you used to do secretly among yourselves; but He turned to you and forgave you; so now associate with them, and seek what Allah Hath ordained for you, and eat and drink, until the white thread of dawn appear to you distinct from its black thread; then complete your fast till the night appears; but do not associate with your wives while ye are in retreat in the mosques. Those are limits (set by) Allah; Approach not nigh thereto. Thus doth Allah make clear His Signs to men; that they may learn self-restraint."** Further evidence is found in a hadith collected by Bukhari, wherein Abu Hurayra reportedly said: **"While we were sitting in the company of Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H.) a man approached and said: 'O Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.)! I'm ruined!' The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: 'What is the matter?' He said: 'I had sexual relations with my wife while observing the Ramadan fast.' Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H.) then asked him: 'Can you find a slave whom you can free?' He said 'no.' Then he asked, 'are you able to fast for two consecutive months?' He said 'no.' Then he asked, 'do you have the wherewithal to feed 60 poor people?' He said 'no!' So, the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) stopped and considered, and we waited like that until a large basket of dates was brought to him. He asked:**

'Where is that questioner?' The man spoke up: 'Here I am.' The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: 'Take this and give it out in charity.' The man then asked: 'Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.), must I find someone poorer than myself to give it to? By Allah, there is no household in town poorer than my own.' The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) laughed until we could see his teeth, the said: 'Go feed your family.'" Likewise, the evidence for not approaching one's wife while she is on her menses is Surah Al-Baqarah (2:222) of the Quran which reads: **"They ask thee concerning women's courses. Say: 'They are a hurt and a pollution, so keep away from women in their courses and do not approach them until they are clean. But when they have purified themselves, you may approach them in any manner, time, or place ordained for you by Allah. For Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean.'"**

When a Muslim husband takes a new wife who is a virgin while already having other wives whom are matrons, his new wife will be entitled to seven days with her new husband. However, if the new wife is a matron and the other wife is a virgin, the husband in question will be required to spend three days with his new wife. This fact is evident from the hadith of Bukhari wherein Anas (RA) reportedly said: **"It is the Prophet's (P.B.U.H.) tradition that if someone marries a virgin and he has already a**

matron wife, he should then stay for seven days with her (the virgin) and then by turns; and if someone marries a matron and already has a virgin wife, he should stay with her (the matron) for three days, and then by turns (among all his wives)."
Furthermore, after the established timeframe of the wife in question has elapsed, the husband will then spend time with all of his wives in turns. This fact is evident from the hadith of Imam Muslim wherein Abd al-Malik bin Abu Bakr bin Abd al-Rahman bin al-Harith bin Hisham reported on the authority of his father from Umm Salama (RA) who reportedly said: "**When Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H.) married Umm Salama, he stayed with her for three nights (she was a matron), and said: 'There is no lack of estimation on the part of your husband for you. If you wish I can stay with you for a week, but in case I stay with you for a week, then I shall have to stay for a week with all my wives**.'"

With this being said, if a husband is physically able, he is even permitted to have sexual intercourse with all of his wives in a single night; provided that he is alone with only one wife at a time. The evidence for this ruling is the hadith of Bukhari wherein Anas bin Malik (RA) reportedly said: "**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) used to pass by (have sexual relation with) all his wives in one night, and at that time he had nine wives**."
Likewise, after the initial timeframe allotted for a new wife

based on her status as a virgin or matron has elapsed, any wife may forfeit her conjugal rights if she so wishes. This fact is evident from the hadith of Bukhari wherein Ayesha (RA) reportedly said: "**Sawda bint Zam'a (RA) gave up her turn to me (Ayesha), and so the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) used to give me (Ayesha) both my day and the day of Sawda**." Furthermore, in another hadith of Bukhari, Ayesha (RA) is reported to have said: "**During his fatal ailment, Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) used to ask his wives, 'Where shall I stay tomorrow? Where shall I stay tomorrow?' He was looking forward to Aisha's turn. So all his wives allowed him to stay where he wished, and he stayed at Aisha's house till he died there. Aisha added: 'He died on the day of my usual turn at my house. Allah took him unto Him while his head was between my chest and my neck and his saliva was mixed with my saliva.'**"

Lastly, as long as it is not the husband's intent to neglect a particular wife, he is even permitted to change the order of his rotation among his wives if either his urges are stronger on a particular day for a specific wife or a specific wife's desire for him is greater on a particular day. This fact is evident from Surah Al-Ahzab (33:51) of the Quran which reads: "**Thou mayest defer (the turn of) any of them that thou pleasest, and thou mayest receive any thou pleasest: and there is no blame**

on thee if thou invite one whose (turn) thou hadst set aside. This were nigher to the cooling of their eyes, the prevention of their grief, and their satisfaction - that of all of them - with that which thou hast to give them: and Allah knows (all) that is in your hearts: and Allah is All-Knowing, Most Forbearing."

Further evidence is found in the hadith of Imam Muslim wherein Anas (RA) reportedly said: **"Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) had nine wives. So when he divided (his stay) with them, the turn of the first wife did not come but on the ninth (day). They (all the wives) used to gather every night in the house of one where he had to come (and stay that night). It was (the night when he had to stay) in the house of 'A'isha (RA), when Zainab (RA) came there. He (the Holy Prophet) stretched his hand towards her (Zainab), whereupon she ('A'isha) said: 'It is Zainab (inquiring if she is being chosen).' Allah's Apostle (P.B.U.H.) then withdrew his hand. There was an altercation between the two until their voices became loud ... there came to her ('A'isha) Abu Bakr (her father), and spoke to her in stern words and said: 'Do you behave like this?'"** Additionally, another hadith in the collection of Imam Muslim that was narrated by Hisham reports on the authority of his father that 'A'isha (RA) used to say: **"Does the woman not feel shy of offering herself to a man?' Then Allah the Exalted and Glorious revealed this verse: 'You may defer any of them you wish and take to yourself any you wish.' I ('A'isha**

said): 'It seems to me that your Lord hastens to satisfy your (the Prophet's) desire.'"

In light of the above mentioned information, it is important to note that whenever a husband has more than one wife he can expect jealousy to ensue among them from time to time. As such, he should be patient with them and considerate of their nature; because, Surah Al-Nisa (4:129) of the Quran clearly says: "**You are never able to be fair and just as between women, even if it is your ardent desire: But turn not away (from a woman) altogether, so as to leave her (as it were) hanging (in the air). If ye come to a friendly understanding, and practice self-restraint, Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.**" What is more, Abu Hurayra (RA) narrated in a hadith of Imam Muslim that Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H.) reportedly said, "**A believing man should not despise a believing woman; if he dislikes one of her characteristics, he will be pleased with another.**" Likewise, a hadith in the collection of Abu Dawud that was narrated by Mu'awiya ibn Hayda states: "**I asked the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) what is the right of someone's wife over him? He said, 'That you feed her when you eat and clothe her when you clothe yourself and do not strike her face. Do not malign her and do not keep apart from her, except in the house**.'" What is more, the wives should also be patient and considerate towards

their husband; because, according to a hadith of Abu Hurayra in the collection of Tirmidhi, the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) reportedly said: "**The most perfect of believers are those most perfect of character; and the best of you are the best of you to your spouses**."

Lastly, at all cost, a wife should avoid being vindictive and refuse to have sexual intercourse with her husband. The evidence for this admonition is the hadith of Imam Muslim wherein Abu Huraira (RA) narrated that Allah's Messenger (P.B.U.H.) reportedly said: "**When a man invites his wife to his bed and she does not come, and he (the husband) spends the night being angry with her, the angels curse her until morning**." The importance of sex is so important in a relationship that a wife cannot fast voluntarily without her husband's permission. This fact is evident from the narration of Abu Huraira that was collected in a hadith of Bukhari which reports that the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) allegedly said: "**A woman should not fast (optional fasts) except with her husband's permission if he is at home (staying with her)**."

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